



Department of Planning and Community Development

Policy # Build – 05-06

Section 101.4 of the Uniform Statewide Building Code states: **101.4. Purpose.** *The purpose of the USBC is to ensure safety to life and property from all hazards incident to structure design, construction, occupancy, repair, maintenance, renovation, removal or demolition. Structures shall be permitted to be constructed, repaired, maintained or renovated at the least possible cost consistent with nationally recognized standards for health, safety, energy conservation, water conservation, adequate egress facilities, sanitary equipment, light and ventilation, fire safety, structural strength, and accessibility for the physically disabled.*

Section 114 of the USBC states in part: *The provisions of the USBC are not intended to prohibit the use of any material or method of construction not specifically prescribed by the USBC, provided any such alternative has been approved. An alternative material or method of construction shall be approved when the building official finds that the proposed design is satisfactory and complies with the intent of the provisions of the USBC, and that the material, method or work offered is, for the purpose intended, at least the equivalent of that prescribed by the USBC in quality, strength, effectiveness, fire resistance, durability and safety.*

Section 301.1.1 of the International Residential Code states: *Alternative provisions.*

As an alternative to the requirements in Section R301.1 the following standards are permitted subject to the limitations of this code and the limitations therein. Where engineered design is used in conjunction with these standards the design shall comply with the International Building Code.

- 1. American Forest and Paper Association (AF&PA) Wood Frame Construction Manual (WFCM).*
- 2. American Iron and Steel Institute (AISI), Standard for Cold-Formed Steel Framing—Prescriptive Method for One- and Two-family Dwellings (COFS/PM).*

For buildings within the scope of the IRC that employ construction methods or materials not specifically referenced within that code, the International Building Code or other nationally recognized standard may serve as a guide for demonstrating compliance with the USBC. Additionally, a code provision in the IBC that allows a deviation for a certain occupancy classification to meet the spirit and intent of the code may be used for a structure that is otherwise designed and regulated by the IRC. The applicant or designer may use any provision in another code and must relate to the same occupancy classification regulated in the IRC (R-3 or R-5). An alternate material or method of construction must be accepted and approved and meet the conditions that relate to the same occupancy regulated in the IRC (R-3 or R-5).

Commentary

Example #1: If a residential occupancy, regulated by the IRC is limited to 3 stories in height, that house may enjoy the provision for including mezzanines that is only referenced for the same occupancy classification within the IBC thus preventing the building from being regarded as a 4 story building.

Example #2: If an elevator is installed in a detached single family residential home, the IBC may serve as the code reference for installation, without further requirements from within the IBC.

Example #3: If a designer proposes to use a Heavy Timber (HT) for a detached single family residence, they may enjoy the provision of Table 503 of the IBC that permits a SFR to be 4 stories in height as long as all requirements of that type of construction are provided.